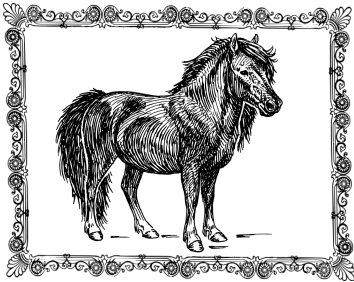


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WORCESTER, THURSDAY, JANUARY 31, 2013.

A GIFT.

A Killer Headache
Ever since you died, the migraines have been getting worse.
At first you tried the usual—aspirin, caffeine, screaming—but you quickly learned that the type of migraine caused by having a large part of your brain eaten by an undead creature does not respond well to medication. The only known remedy is nutritional.
The brains of lower animals will work, partially, for a short time, but only human brains have the right balance of vitamins, essential fats and amino acids necessary to hold off the searing, throbbing agony long enough to make it to your next meal. And they taste surprisingly good.
Unfortunately, while you were busy figuring all this out, the rest of the undead world was finishing off the last of the human race, leaving you with *A Killer Headache*.
A Killer Headache is a text adventure game that you can download or play online. Go to bit.ly/ifdb-killer-headache to try it out. (Mike Ciul)

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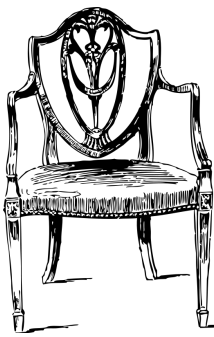
The Myth of the Runner’s High

BY SCOTT SCHAEFFER-DUFFY
Beginners often long for a time when running is not only easier, but actually fun. They can hardly wait to experience the endorphin-induced euphoria popularly called “the runner’s high.”
Well, sorry to burst that balloon. Running will always suck. It hurts when you begin because you are out of shape and hurts when you are fit because you run proportionately faster. The weather will be ideal for running about two weeks a year, otherwise it will be too hot, cold, windy, icy, humid, snowy, or rainy. Courses that boast they are “glass flat” will torture you with “rolling hills.” You will have to go to the bathroom at awkward times and visit some very dicey port-a-potties. (My wife has button-holed complete strangers during half marathons to use their bathrooms.)
You will get sunburned, windburned, frostbitten, and in my case, twice last year, stung by bees. You will feel misery that has no equal outside a cancer ward. On long runs, men actually bleed from their nipples unless they coat them with Vaseline, for crying out loud!
I’m an Irish Catholic, I get through my runs by reciting the Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary: e.g. Jesus is tortured, Jesus is crowned with thorns, Jesus dies on the cross.
I’d sugar-coat it if I could, but that won’t do you any favors. There are real rewards of running. They just don’t occur during the running itself.
Scott Schaeffer-Duffy is a Catholic Worker, marathoner, and high school cross-country coach. This article is excerpted from his book Straight Talk on Running: An Introduction to America’s Weirdest Sport.



Faster Cake for a Stronger America

Cupcakes have so much cachet nowadays. There are stores and even roving dispensaries devoted to the pursuit of cupcakey goodness. But cupcakes take a long time and special equipment to bake, or else they’re miles away and cost too much money. There’s another way: the **mugcake**.
Just gather together 3 tablespoons of flour, 3 tablespoons of sugar, 3 tablespoons of oil, 3 tablespoons of water or soymilk, ¼ teaspoon of vanilla, and ¼ teaspoon of baking soda. Stir them together gently in a coffee mug, microwave for about 3 minutes, and *voilà!* A single-serving portion of deliciously warm, fluffy cake emerges. Next time, try adding a couple tablespoons of cocoa powder, or a couple teaspoons of chocolate chips.
Now you have no excuse for not eating fresh, delicious, healthy cake with every meal. (Holly Jones)

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Prickles
He planted a translucent orange bottle on the coffee table before us and said, “The only drug worth doing my friends, is prickles.”
Prickles is the street name of **beta-alanine**, an amino acid supplement. I hate drugs and drug culture, but as a journalist I knew it was my duty to stuff my bloodstream with as many free substances as I could.
We stirred the coarse powder into glasses of water and toasted to our debauchery.
Minutes later he was mumbling coherently about his scalp being prickly. My lips were burning like they had very mild salsa on them.
“My hands are tingling,” he announced. “How are you doing?” I still felt normal.
Why is beta-alanine available in the first place? It all comes down to **carnosine**, a dipeptide made of the amino acids beta-alanine and histidine. There’s a lot of carnosine in brain and muscle tissues, but vegetarians have relatively low levels of carnosine, as little as half the levels of omnivores. Since taking beta alanine increases levels of carnosine in muscle tissue, beta alanine is popular with some veg athletes. The *paraesthesia* or “prickles” associated with beta-alanine are caused by the spike in beta-alanine levels in the blood after taking it, which somehow triggers mild nerve sensations.
Five minutes later my extremities began to tingle and itch. “Oh, I think I feel something! Is it supposed to feel like I have eczema all over my body?”
“Yes. Hell yes.”
As the trip went on my symptoms went from slightly interesting to slightly irritating. Eventually the drug-induced pins and needles subsided, and I lay back in the usual tepid euphoria that is sobriety.
For those still wondering why this seemingly pointless drug is sweeping the streets of Worcester, the answer is in its subtlety. Usually one’s experience of itchiness is bound up in the cause of the itchiness, whether lingering too long in a hot shower or your foot being asleep. Beta-alanine, however, creates an itchiness without apparent cause, forcing us to contemplate that sensation *in and of itself*, providing, at least for a moment, a window into the very nature of human experience. (Shane Capra)

"Mothers News"
IT IS A
NEWSPAPER.
mothersnews.net

an excerpt from
Just Kids

... I went through our belongings and found exactly fifty-five cents, slipped on my grey trench-coat and Mayakovsky cap, and headed to the Automat. I got my tray and slipped in my coins but the window wouldn't open. I tried again without luck and then I noticed that the price had gone up to sixty-five cents. I was disappointed, to say the least, when I heard a voice say, "Can I help?" I turned around and it was Allen Ginsberg. We had never met but there was no mistaking the face of one of our great poets and activists. I looked into those intense dark eyes punctuated by his dark curly beard and just nodded. Allen added the extra dime and also stood me to a cup of coffee. I wordlessly followed him to his table, and then ploved into the sandwich. Allen introduced himself. He was talking about Walt Whitman and I mentioned that I was raised near Camden, where Whitman was buried, when he leaned forward and looked at me intently.

"Are you a girl?" he asked.

"Yeah," I said, "Is that a problem?"

He just laughed. "I'm sorry. I took you for a very pretty boy."

I got the picture immediately.

"Well, does this mean I return the sandwich?"

"No, enjoy it. It was my mistake."

He told me he was writing a long elegy for Jack Kerouac who had recently passed away. "Three days after Rimbaud's birthday," I said. I shook his hand and we parted company.

Sometime later Allen became my good friend and teacher. We often reminisced about our first encounter and he once asked how I would describe how we met. "I would say you fed me when I was hungry," I told him. And he did.



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Dance at the Masquerade Ball
BY BRUCE "SNOW GHOST" RUSSELL

I'm done with all your interference and lies. There's no place to run. You know who wrote that letter. You know what I must do.

Backstage during the show, the chandeliers begin to shake.

I've been bled dry. Open up a vein and you'll see poverty. I'm tired of this blackmail. We need to get rid of her.

This old and rotten theater has seen better days. Sounds of laughter still haunt its walls.

All the hatred built up over the years still resonates inside the theater.

Guests begin to disappear.

He rages behind the stage at the masquerade ball. The phantom of the rock opera rises up with a blood-curdling scream. From now on he will be the provder behind the stage.

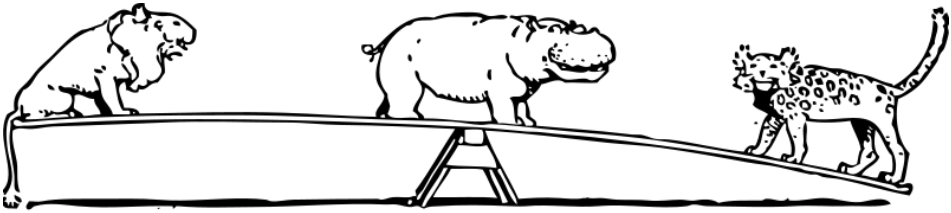


POCKET DOORBELL
It is in the Apple App Store and will make your phone a contemporary doorbell. CNET called it "Dumb, yes, but kind of cool, too."

Just Kids

A BOOK BY PATTI SMITH REVIEWED BY JEN BURT

Just Kids is Patti Smith's account of her unconventional relationship with the photographer Robert Mapplethorpe. They started as a heterosexual couple. When Robert came out as gay, they remained close friends and muses, caring for each other while struggling with poverty, hunger, trenchmouth, and depression. In the hands of a lesser writer, this would have been just another tale of romantic starving artists crossing paths with the famous and successful, on their way to fame of their own. But Smith avoids this trap, and relates her story with the perfect mixture of humor, history, poignancy, coffee, and lots and lots of donuts.



Cage Perspectives

Deadfall

BY MARK BENEDETTI

The 2006 DVD release of the 1993 Nicolas Cage classic *Deadfall* bears a cover that looks like the poster for every generic, vaguely noir thriller of the past ten years. A shadowy figure stands at the bottom of the image, framed and backlit by the headlights of an anonymous car, while the blandly serious faces of three of the film's stars—Michael Biehn, Sarah Trigger, and, in the center, Nicolas Cage—float ominously above the film's title and tagline: "Trust no one."

While Cage, in 2006, had yet to begin the phase of his career that saw him star in a series of generic thrillers (*Next* [2007], *Bangkok Dangerous* [2008], *Knowing* [2009], *Seeking Justice* [2011], *Trespass* [2011], *Stolen* [2012]), the *Deadfall* cover seems to presage that career turn/money grab by updating what is a rather generic early-'90s thriller with a more contemporary aesthetic, initiating what has become a fairly thorough whitewashing of Cage's unique acting talents and provocative public image behind a series of empty roles in rote genre films.

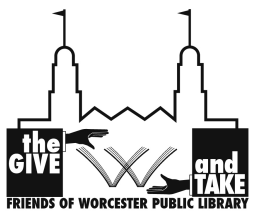
The fact that Lions Gate chose to initiate this whitewashing with *Deadfall* is particularly galling for those of us who celebrate Cage's commitment to nouveau shamanistic acting, since *Deadfall* is perhaps his greatest performance of utter weirdness and manic intensity.

The DVD cover would have you believe that Cage is the film's male lead, even though he is only in it for about 20 minutes.

It would have you believe that his character looks like a generically -understated thriller character, not a profane lunatic thunderbolt sporting sunglasses and a terrible wig and screaming in tongues with an inconsistent accent.

It would have you believe that Cage has been tamed, molded into just another bland star fit to play bland heroes in bland action thrillers more suited for Netflix streaming than theatrical release.

The next installment of "Cage Perspectives" will address those bland roles and the counterintuitive ways they deploy Cage's stardom.



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Dædalus, in the old myth, was trapped in a tower with his son, Icarus. He made wings of feathers, string, and wax, and planned their escape. Dædalus told Icarus not to fly too close to the sun, lest the wax melt, nor too close to the sea, lest the feathers get soggy with mist. High over the ocean, Icarus flew higher and higher, the wings melted, and he crashed and drowned.

Some bohemian scenes encourage people to fly closer to the sun, supporting them when they take risks and move towards their fears. These scenes ease the pain of trying and failing. Other scenes help people feel good about flying closer to the sea, settling for what's easy, making their hearts and dreams smaller, living lives of distracting comforts. These scenes ease the pain of not trying at all.

Which one does bohemian Worcester do? (*Mike Benedetti*)




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Revenue	
Donations from editors	\$54.53
Ad sales	\$0.00
Other donations	\$0.00
Expenses	
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Test copies	\$5.00
Car rental	\$9.03
Net Income	\$0.00

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